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This invention was made in part using government support under NIH Grant No. 20519, awarded by the National Institutes of Health. The government has certain rights to this invention.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 12, 18, 21, and 33 as follows, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 22, 30, 31, and 32 are reiterated below without amendment.

1. (Twice Amended) A method to desensitize a B cell antigen receptor, said method comprising: contacting a B cell antigen receptor with an antibody, wherein said B cell antigen receptor has a transducer component consisting of an Igα-Igβ dimer, and a membrane Ig (mIg) component, wherein said antibody binds to the extracellular domain of said transducer component;

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wherein contact with said antibody: (1) causes a dissociation of said mIg component from said transducer component when said components are associated with each other prior to contact with said antibody; or (2) inhibits association of said mIg component with said transducer component when said components are dissociated from each other prior to contact with said antibody;

and wherein said B cell antigen receptor remains competent to bind its antigen, and fails, or has a reduced ability, to transduce signals.

2 4. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said antibody inhibits association of said mIg component with said transducer component when said components are dissociated from each other.

3 5. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 2 4, wherein said antibody selectively binds to a portion of said transducer component that contacts a portion of said mIg component when said receptor is bound by its natural antigen, thereby inhibiting contact of said transducer component with said mIg component.

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4 6. (Twice Amended) The method of Claim 2 4, wherein said antibody selectively binds to a portion of said transducer component which contacts a portion of said mIg component

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